

REMARKS:

Claims 8-14 and 17-26 are pending in the application. By this amendment, claims 8, 9, 10, and 14 are amended. Applicants request reconsideration and allowance in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Objection

Claim 8 is objected to for sentence structure (“a and b and c and d” instead of “a, b, c, and d”). Claim 8 has been amended appropriately. Accordingly, the objection is overcome.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 10 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for certain informalities (used of the term “-like” in claim 10; use of the term “or in a similar way” in claim 14). Claims 10 and 14 have been amended appropriately. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Independent claims 8 and 9 (as well as various claims depending from them) are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Anderson, et al. (U.S. 3,684,637) and Sobolev (U.S. 5,030,488), respectively. Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

Previously, Applicants explained that Anderson, et al. and Sobolev both teach complete coating of the cover sheets with adhesive. That is in contrast to the present application, in which various properties of the composite structure are tailored by applying the adhesive and fibers only to specific areas (claims 8 and 9) or by specifically selecting various properties of the fibers (claim 8).

In the present Office Action, however, and responding to Applicants’ previous amendments and remarks, the Examiner explains that

With respect to the arguments against claim 8, in manufacturing a composite layer structure, the claim can, but does not strictly limit, applying adhesive and fibers onto predetermined, specific areas of at least one cover sheet. Therefore, the rejection of claim 8 is still maintained in view of Anderson.

With respect to the arguments against claim 9, in manufacturing a composite layer structure, the claim can, but does not strictly limit, locally applying a mixture of adhesive and fibers onto predetermined areas of at least one cover sheet. Therefore, the rejection of claim 9 is still maintained in view of Sobolev.

In light of the Examiner's comments, Applicants have revised claims 8 and 9 to recite more affirmatively that properties of the structure are tailored, in contrast to previous recitation that the properties can be tailored. In view of that amendment, Applicants reassert their previous arguments over Anderson and Sobolev and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 24-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Sokolowski, U.S. 3,327,708. According to the Office Action, Sokolowski discloses a method in which two cover sheets are provided, onto one of which adhesive and then fibers are applied, then in which another cover sheet is laminated onto the adhesive layer. Applicants traverse this rejection.

In Sokolowski, adhesive is applied to a web 11 of creped wadding sheet, and then a web 28a of substantially longitudinally aligned fibers is pressed into engagement with the adhesive. After the adhesive is cured on drum 32, the web is wound up onto finished roll 13. Notably, no second cover sheet is ever applied to the wadding sheet/fibers laminate; rather, the fibers are exposed and form the upper surface of the composite product. See, for example, column 4, lines 13-16 ("the curing operation is carried out with the layer of fibers forming the upper ply of the laminate in contact with the heated surface of drum 32[]" (emphasis added)) and lines 54-59 ("the line of adhesive 15 penetrates into the creped wadding 11 to a considerable extent to provide firm bonding therewith while the fibers 48 are only partially embedded into the adhesive with essentially no adhesive extending beyond the upper surface of the fibers[]" (emphasis added)). Thus, Sokolowski does not anticipate the claimed invention, and Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 10, 12, 13, 17, and 19-23 (all dependent) are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 based on Anderson, et al. (as applied to claim 8) in view of various secondary references. Applicants submit that none of the secondary references teaches or suggests the application of adhesive at specific areas, and therefore none of the secondary references remedies the

deficiency of Anderson, et al. (or Sobolev) as a reference. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the remaining claims are allowable for at least the same reasons the independent claims are allowable, and Applicants respectfully request that the § 103 rejections be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that all remaining claims are in condition for allowance, and timely notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

The undersigned representative requests any extension of time that may be deemed necessary to further the prosecution of this application.

The undersigned representative authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees under 37 C.F.R. 1.16 or 1.17 that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 14-1437, referencing Attorney Docket No.: 7589.207.PCUS00.

In order to facilitate the resolution of any issues or questions presented by this paper, the Examiner may directly contact the undersigned by phone to further the discussion.

Novak, Druce & Quigg, LLP
1000 Louisiana, Suite 5300
Houston, Texas 77002
(713) 571-3400
(713) 456-2836 (fax)
tracy.druce@novakdruce.com

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Tracy W. Druce", written in a cursive style.

Tracy W. Druce, Esq.
Reg. No. 35,493